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The  
American Historical Review

THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW, 1895-1920

WHEN a notable American university was celebrating with just pride its first decennial anniversary, a "candid friend" who was present, from an "allied or associated" nation not here to be specified, remarked with austere pleasantry that "when one of our institutions is only ten years old, we try to conceal the fact". Twenty-five years may be—it is permissible to the editor to hope that it will prove to be—relatively a short period in the life of the *American Historical Review*, but, after all, twenty-five years is nearly a generation of human life, and its completion, by an institution however modest in scope, may well warrant some sort of commemoration. Most of those who now take (and we hope read) our journal are too young to remember the earlier part of its history; and moreover, there are features of the story of its origin that may interest the student of the history of scholarly enterprises in general.

America had not been wholly without historical journals in earlier times than the year 1895. Besides the organs of local historical societies, we had from 1857 to 1875 the *Historical Magazine*, edited during most of its career by Henry B. Dawson, a robust political partisan, stoutly polemical; and the centennial year 1876 had brought into existence the *Magazine of American History*, edited successively by John Austin Stevens, jr., the Reverend Dr. B. F. De Costa, and Mrs. Martha J. Lamb. Useful magazines they were, but they belonged to and represented a period when the little military engagements of the Revolutionary War, the biographies of its heroes and of the "Fathers" in general, the minutiae of voyages and discoveries, endlessly disputable, and the local and antiquarian details of the colonial period, were regarded as the main matters of American history, and those were the subjects with which their pages were filled; also they were confined to American history. By

1895, however, the study of history in the United States had passed into a more advanced stage of development. It had become less provincial, less contracted in view. Its chief motive powers had passed from the hands of elderly antiquarians into those of young teachers. Where in 1857 there had been a dozen college teachers of history in the country, in 1895 there were nearly or quite a hundred, and nearly half of them had studied in German universities. In those days, before the French universities had developed their superior excellences, Germany was the Mecca of the ambitious American historical student, and the German seminary the place where his mind came into fructifying contact with the historical scholarship of the world at large.

To such minds the rôle of scientific journals in the development and maintenance of their study was familiar. They were readers of the *Historische Zeitschrift*, which Ranke and others had established in 1859, and of the *Revue Historique*, founded by Monod in 1876, which most of them probably regarded as the best model of what an historical journal should be. It was certain that, as soon as the historical profession in the United States had attained a certain number, and a certain stage of importance and influence in the academic world, its members would wish to establish a periodical organ of American historical scholarship. No doubt a considerable impulse in that direction came from the foundation of the *English Historical Review*, whose initial number (January, 1886), with Lord Acton's famous article, made so brilliant a beginning. That impulse was probably strengthened among us by the visits paid to various American universities, later in that year, by the first editor of that journal, Dr. Mandell Creighton, afterward bishop of Peterborough and of London, who came to America as representative of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, at the two-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of Harvard University. The present writer, at least, remembers well that from the time of his brief talk with Dr. Creighton the desire to see America provided with a scientific historical journal of her own, and to help if possible in its establishment, was often in his thoughts, and he presumes the same to have been true of others. At all events, the notion was in the air.

In the actual genesis of the *Review*, there was an element of fortunate coincidence—coincidence made fortunate by the amiable disinterestedness which characterizes the historical profession in this country and which, we may presume, springs naturally from the historian's habit of looking at all sides of questions in his field. At that time each of the subjects most nearly allied to history had one

or more professional journals in the United States. Nearly all of them were the peculiar property of individual universities, and were sustained by that loyal zeal for the individual university which is at times so great a help and at times so great a hindrance to the best progress of learning in America. Excellent as these journals were, they would have been the better for having a broader basis and drawing their material from a wider circle of contributors. If in such a subject as political economy, in which radical differences of opinion and tendency play an important part, there is an advantage in having different journals that represent the different schools of doctrine prevalent at various universities, in history, on the other hand, as history is pursued in North America, such differences of doctrine have no corresponding degree of significance, and, however journals of history might multiply in the future, it was fortunate that the first scientific American historical journal should not be in any sense the organ of a single institution, but should be founded, on as broad a basis as possible, in the good will of the whole profession.

It is possible that historical faculties in several American universities were in 1894 contemplating the foundation of historical journals; what is certain is that three such plans were coming to something like maturity in the closing months of that year, at Harvard, Cornell, and the University of Pennsylvania. Their development was so nearly simultaneous that no stress was ever subsequently laid on questions of priority. The plan which was developing at Harvard was based from the beginning on the thought of extensive co-operation, in the management of the journal, on the part of historical scholars in other universities. The Cornell plan was framed by Professor Henry Morse Stephens, who in that autumn had come to Ithaca from England. Besides his well-known learning and his gifts as a teacher, he had had much experience in journalistic reviewing and some share in the first years' work of the *English Historical Review*. Late in November he proposed to the trustees of Cornell University a project for an historical journal, of which he should be editor-in-chief, and in the conduct of which Professors Moses Coit Tyler and George L. Burr should be associated with him. It was, by the first intention, to be distinctly a possession of Cornell University, but the aid and support of the historical profession in general were of course and with reason expected.

During that same autumn of 1894 while the Cornell professor of history was shaping his plans, the faculty of history in Har-

vard University, which at that time consisted of Professors Emerton, Gross, Macvane, Channing, and Hart, and in a less technical sense included Justin Winsor and Professor W. J. Ashley, were engaged in plans of a similar nature, but providing on a much broader basis for co-operation on the part of historical faculties in other institutions. It does not appear that either project was known to the framers of the other until the meeting of the American Historical Association in the closing days of December, 1894. At that time there were some private conversations on the subject, but not such as would spread definite knowledge or would necessarily check the separate maturing of the two projects. It happened, however, that both Mr. Stephens and Mr. Emerton, very naturally, during the course of that session consulted Professor George B. Adams of Yale respecting their plans. Strongly impressed, as indeed was Professor Emerton, with the desirability of having one historical journal, supported by all the strength that the historical scholars of the country could supply, rather than two competing journals less completely representative, Mr. Adams on the last day of the year wrote to both informants, in terms intended to bring about a union of forces. At Harvard the effect of his representations was to cause a suspension of plans until a formal conference, representative of various universities and scholars, could be had. To Cornell he had suggested that the project there formed might be widened to include such representatives in the capacity of associate editors, while still, in recognition of the generous pecuniary provisions made by the trustees of Cornell University, Mr. Stephens should be editor-in-chief.

On February 11, 1895, Professor Stephens formally submitted to the executive committee of the Cornell trustees a project embodying these modifications of his original plan. On the next day the executive committee adopted this project, made liberal provisions for the initial expenses of the review and for its subsequent maintenance, and voted an increase of Professor Stephens's salary. A circular letter dated February 17, and signed by Professors Tyler, Burr, and Stephens, was sent to about a dozen historical scholars in different parts of the country, outlining the plan and inviting the recipients to act as associate editors assisting Professor Stephens and his Cornell colleagues. Meanwhile, however, on January 28, the Harvard professors had sent invitations to a larger number of scholars, in various places, asking them to come to a conference in Cambridge at Easter, to consider the foundation, on some co-operative plan, of an American Historical Review. Not unnaturally, it so happened that Professor Adams and at least three others of those

to whom these invitations went were also among the dozen who, a few days later, received the invitations from Cornell, and all these three, each on his own motion, wrote immediately to both parties, in the same sense in which Mr. Adams had written at an earlier stage, urging the advantages of a combination of forces.

Forthwith Professor Stephens, at the instance of the Cornell group, journeyed to Boston, to Providence, and to New Haven, everywhere seeking the means of harmonizing the Cornell plan with the desire so widely expressed for a single journal, with a truly national basis. As a result of these consultations and of ensuing correspondence it was agreed that both plans, and the whole matter of the journal, should be laid before a general conference of those interested, to be held at New York on April 6. The call, which was dated March 20, went out over six representative signatures, those of Professors Emerton, Tyler, and Adams, Professor (later President) H. P. Judson of Chicago, Professor McMaster of the University of Pennsylvania, and Professor Sloane of Princeton (afterward of Columbia University). Those invited were mostly professors of history in the leading universities and colleges. By the time the conference took place, the Cornell authorities were disposed to waive all the provisions that had accompanied their subvention, except the proviso that the editor-in-chief should be a Cornell professor. Morse Stephens personally had declared that if a co-operative plan was adopted and the Cornell plan rejected he would do all he could to persuade Cornell to withdraw from the field and would offer to surrender that portion of his salary which had been granted in view of the editorial work. Though the liberality of his trustees made it unnecessary for him to carry out this generous sacrifice, it is only just to add, by a little anticipation, that he cheerfully surrendered the post of editor-in-chief for which he had been designated, and throughout the initial years of the *Review* did yeoman service of much value in the Board of Editors.

The conference of April 6, 1895, held in the rooms of the Reform Club in New York City, was attended by twenty-six persons, of whom seventeen are still living. The twenty-six were: Mr. Charles Francis Adams,<sup>1</sup> Professors George B. Adams of Yale and Charles M. Andrews of Bryn Mawr, Dr. Frederic Bancroft, Professor Edward G. Bóurne<sup>1</sup> of Western Reserve University (professor-elect in Yale), Professors John W. Burgess of Columbia, Edward P. Cheyney of the University of Pennsylvania, and William A. Dunning of Columbia, Mr. Paul L. Ford,<sup>1</sup> Professor Herbert D.

<sup>1</sup> Since deceased.

Foster of Dartmouth, Dr. Herbert Friedenwald of Philadelphia, Professors Charles Gross<sup>1</sup> and Albert Bushnell Hart of Harvard, J. F. Jameson of Brown University, McMaster of Pennsylvania, Edwin K. Mitchell of Hartford Theological Seminary, Dana C. Munro of Pennsylvania, Herbert L. Osgood<sup>1</sup> of Columbia, and James H. Robinson of Pennsylvania, Mr. John C. Ropes,<sup>1</sup> Professors Lucy M. Salmon of Vassar, Sloane of Princeton, and Stephens<sup>1</sup> of Cornell, Dr. Charles J. Stillé<sup>1</sup> of Philadelphia, Professors Tyler<sup>1</sup> of Cornell and George M. Wrong of Toronto.

In this conference, by unanimous agreement, the main outlines of an organization for the proposed review were settled. To meet expenses, except in so far as they might be assumed by a publisher, it was resolved that an association of guarantors should be formed, guaranteeing in the aggregate two thousand dollars per annum for two years, and, if needed, for a third year, after which it was hoped that the *Review* would be self-supporting. It was also resolved that the conference should elect an editorial board of five members, which should select a managing editor and, for a term of one year, serve as an executive committee, in charge of the new undertaking. Professors Adams, Hart, McMaster, Sloane, and Stephens were elected as the first Board of Editors. In order that the West, hardly at all represented in the conference, might have a representative in the Board, Professor Judson of Chicago was presently added to this group.<sup>2</sup> The Board elected as its chairman Professor Adams, as its secretary and treasurer Professor Hart; and to these two, throughout all its earlier years, the *Review* was signally indebted for invaluable services, especially in all business matters. A managing editor (the writer of these pages, managing editor 1895-1901, 1905-1920) was chosen to serve as executive officer under this board of six. It was resolved by the Board that the first number of the new quarterly should appear on the first of October. Arrangements were presently made with the Macmillan Company of New York as publishers. It is a pleasure to bear testimony in this place to the uniformly happy relations which during twenty-five years have subsisted between these publishers and the editors, to the kindness and consideration with which, especially in the

<sup>2</sup> The list of members of the Board from the beginning to the present time runs as follows: George B. Adams, 1895-1912; Albert B. Hart, 1895-1909; Harry P. Judson, 1895-1902; John B. McMaster, 1895-1898; William M. Sloane, 1895-1911; H. Morse Stephens, 1895-1905; Andrew C. McLaughlin, 1898-1914; J. Franklin Jameson, 1902—; George L. Burr, 1905-1915; Frederick J. Turner, 1909-1915; James H. Robinson, 1911—; Edward P. Cheyney, 1912—; Carl Becker, 1914—; Ephraim Emerton, 1915-1917; Claude H. Van Tyne, 1915—; Charles H. Haskins, 1917-1919; Williston Walker, 1920—.

earlier years, the president of the company, Mr. George P. Brett, placed his experience and sagacity at the service of the Board, and to the perfect delicacy with which the publishers have abstained from every effort to use the pages of the *Review* in the interest of any of their other publications. Never in twenty-five years has any suggestion come from them as to how any "Macmillan book" should be treated in the pages devoted to reviews, while in all pecuniary matters their course has been so generous that, if the *Review* has been of service to the cause of history, a large share of the thanks belongs to the Macmillan Company.

It is a pleasure also to record the gratitude of the editors to the New Era Printing Company of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, who since the second year have been the printers of the *Review*, and in all the many details involved in that function have constantly rendered it faithful, intelligent, and efficient service.

During the next months of 1895 the Board of Editors had a twofold labor to perform, that of securing guarantors in order that the *Review* might be possible and that of securing for its earlier numbers such contributions that it might be creditable. For the former purpose, members of the Board and of the organizing conference canvassed their friends and their university circles. The Harvard and Yale constituencies stood foremost in the amount of subscriptions; other institutions in which groups of guarantors were found were Cornell, Chicago, Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania, that of Toronto, and the Hartford Theological Seminary. The second recorded subscriber to the fund was Theodore Roosevelt, and one of the earliest was John Hay. So, in sums of from five to fifty-five dollars each, more than three hundred persons assured the new journal of an annual fund of more than \$3600 per annum for a period of three years. A meeting of the Association of Guarantors was held in December, 1895, at which the same editors were formally elected by that body, for terms so arranged as to expire in from one to six years, a six-year term being established as normal. To this meeting the treasurer of the Board submitted his accounts. Similar meetings were held in December of 1896 and 1897. Meanwhile, the Board of Editors had been having three or four meetings in each of these years, and in subsequent years it has been its practice to have three meetings yearly, meetings of great value to the conduct of the journal. Many scientific reviews have merely nominal boards, composed of distinguished members who only lend their names, but ours has been a real board of editors, directing the managing editor in the earlier years, advising and



counselling with him since the date (1901) when a member of the Board became managing editor.

As to the contents of the *Review*, it was intended that, as in most historical journals, they should consist of four sorts and should be organized in four divisions: "body articles", documents heretofore unpublished, reviews of books, and items of news respecting either the historical profession or new publications or developments in the field of history, European or American—for the title *American Historical Review* never implied confinement to the history of America, nor any other emphasis upon it than what the natural flow of contributions might bring.

Concerning articles, the preliminary circular put forth by the Board of Editors said, "the three criteria for contributions to the *Review* are: that they shall be fresh and original in treatment; that they shall be the result of accurate scholarship; and that they shall have distinct literary merit. Articles which fulfill these conditions will be welcomed on any field of history." Laudable desires, still entertained! though at the end of twenty-five years the editors would be obliged to confess, somewhat ruefully, that not everything they have printed has conformed to all these standards. A stream cannot rise higher than its source; with our best endeavors, the level our journal can attain is in some degree conditioned by the actual facts of a world, a country, and a profession in which not everyone who has something to say can say it well. In Parliament there are "papers by command"; an historical review, even though many papers are based on editorial request or suggestion, cannot always command all the excellences its ideals might require.

Neither in respect to articles solicited, nor in their selection from among articles offered, nor in respect to the reviewing of books, have the editors ever sought, either by choice of subject or by suggestions as to treatment, to favor any particular school or to sustain any doctrinal tendency in American historical work. They have wished their journal to be the organ of no circle less extensive than the whole American historical profession. They have desired to be hospitable to every variety of historical thought that is at all current among the members of that profession, and have had no "policy" but, while maintaining high standards of method and of scholarship, to be catholic in matters of opinion. If it has so happened that all the editors have been professors, and if the tone of the journal has been distinctly academic, those limitations have their explanation. A professor in an important university hears of more of the good work that is going on than comes to the knowledge of one less cen-

trally placed. Moreover, though we ought to guard against the characteristic weaknesses and defects of academics, it remains true that far the greatest part of America's historical production springs from academic circles. More than three-fourths of the members of the American Historical Association are teachers; and the number of Americans who with their own means and without academic connection were or are working in history was unfortunately small in 1895 and is, in proportion, even smaller in 1920.

The salutatory article of the new journal was a paper on "History and Democracy", by Professor Sloane, of the Board of Editors, who set forth with his customary breadth of view and eloquence the gains which the history of society owed to the modern developments of adjoining sciences, the need of sound historical knowledge for the conduct of a democratic government, and the encouragement which our conservative spirit, our varied European origins, and our cultivation of history in the past might lend to the expectation that American democracy would be favorable to the development of historical work among us, and that that work would be marked not only by solid merits but even by literary excellence. For articles of substantive history for their first number the editors made their best endeavors in many quarters. They secured from M. C. Tyler a valuable and most attractive article on the Party of the Loyalists in the American Revolution, and from Professor F. J. Turner one on Western State-Making during the Revolutionary Era. John Fiske was prevented from assisting, by exclusive contracts which he had made with his publishers; von Holst, by failing health. Henry C. Lea gave to the first number a bit on the First Castilian Inquisitor, and a more important article to the second number. Henry Adams gave to the first number a chip from his workshop, slight but entertaining, on Count Edward de Crillon. Pressed for a further contribution, he replied in characteristic fashion:

Long absences are one cause which has broken my relations with the world. The other and more serious cause is that, in the chaotic and unintelligible condition in which I found—and left—the field of knowledge which is called History, I became overpoweringly conscious that any further pretence on my part of acting as instructor would be something worse than humbug, unless I could clear my mind in regard to what I wanted to teach. As History stands, it is a sort of Chinese Play, without end and without lesson. With these impressions I wrote the last line of my History, asking for a round century before going further. . . . I have nothing to say. I would much rather wipe out all I have ever said, than go on with more. I am glad to hear other men if they think they have something worth saying; but it is as a scholar, and not as a teacher, that I have taken my seat.

The old files of correspondence from those early days bring back pleasant recollections of many historical students of the older generation who helped the new journal on many occasions and with cordial good-will, and whose generous encouragement is remembered with affectionate gratitude—Charles Francis Adams and Daniel H. Chamberlain, Jacob D. Cox and George W. Julian, Admiral Mahan, that “*veray parfit gentil knight*”, John C. Ropes and James Schouler, Edward M. Shepard and Justin Winsor. Are there public men now who take the same interest in history as did these men of Civil War times? The old letters bring up too the memory of younger men now gone, colleagues like Edward Bourne or Charles Gross, who could be relied on for constant aid and sympathetic counsel; or Paul Ford, with his wonderful resources of knowledge, or the sagacious Herbert Adams; and grateful remembrance of the many friends of the new journal who are happily still living. Especially interesting are the many messages of congratulation upon the first number, for they show plainly how pleased were our scattered workers in history to find themselves so numerous and capable of co-operative effort so large and varied.

The pieces printed under the rubric “Documents” in this first number had not the same importance as some that have since been published, but at least one has always the satisfaction of feeling, with respect to this section, that what value its contents may have is permanent. Articles may be superseded, reviews of books serve in the main a temporary purpose, but original materials usually retain their value unimpaired. What one would like best would be to print, quarter after quarter, a series of documents found in private hands or houses, and so exposed to destruction—brands rescued from the burning—yet of such a character as to revolutionize important chapters of history; but this is too much to expect. We may be content in twenty-five years if we have made, whether from private repositories or from public archives, a good many helpful additions to the documentary material for history, chiefly, of course, American history.

In the earlier volumes there was a rubric for bibliographies of a certain sort, lists of original materials mostly, but this was before long abandoned. In the twentieth volume, on the other hand, the practice was begun of reserving a special place, with the heading “Notes and Suggestions”, for minor contributions, fruits of research having a limited scope and yet a certain importance. In European historical journals such by-products of the historian’s trade abound; in our case, though the notes actually sent in have

been good; the supply has for some reason never been as abundant as had been expected.

Of all the contents of the first number, it was perhaps the reviews of books on which the editors bestowed most thought and from which they derived most satisfaction. The difficulties were not inconsiderable, in the case of a journal which had as yet no established position, and which had to encounter the then formidable competition of the *Nation*; but books were obtained, through a range sufficient to justify the claim to catholicity which Professor Sloane's salutatory had announced, and the desired reviewers were cordially willing to help. A series of reviews which included notices of Hodgkin's *Italy and Her Invaders* by Professor Emerton, of Pollock and Maitland's *History of English Law* by Professor Melville M. Bigelow, of Seebohm's *Tribal System in Wales* by Professor C. M. Andrews, of Fitzmaurice's *Life of Sir William Petty* by W. J. Ashley, of Lord Wolseley's *Napoleon* and Lord Roberts's *Wellington* by Colonel Theodore Dodge, of Lavisse's *Victor Duruy* by John Bigelow, of *The Life and Letters of Edward A. Freeman* by Herbert Adams, of Thayer's *Cases on Constitutional Law* by Judge Simeon Baldwin, of Withers's *Chronicles of Border Warfare* (ed. Thwaites) by Theodore Roosevelt, of Bigelow's *Tilden* by Edward M. Shepard, and of Prowse's *Newfoundland* by Goldwin Smith, certainly did not lack distinction.

In twenty-five years, more than four thousand books have been reviewed. It has been the intention of the editors to include among them all the important historical volumes published in the United States, and the most important of those that have appeared in European countries, but their success in obtaining the latter from the European publishers has naturally been less complete. It has been their desire that the books described and appraised should represent all fields and varieties of history—not political history alone, but also ecclesiastical, legal, military, naval, economic, social, and cultural history, and the general history of science and of literature. There were not wanting in 1895, perhaps there are not wanting now, those to whom such an inclusiveness appeared strange. A friendly reviewer of the first number mentioned with mild surprise that a review of Briggs's *The Messiah of the Apostles* had "somehow strayed in", as if the chief personage of history were no concern of history properly speaking, because his story could be labelled ecclesiastical history and so relegated to the exclusive care of ecclesiastics and their journals, or as if the empire of history could be profited by creating as many independent satrapies as possible and refusing

to meddle in any territory but such as no one else desired. If any of the readers of our journal have preferred a narrower view, the editors cherish the modest hope that they have done them a little good, by compelling them occasionally to look over their fences.

If there is anything in the conduct of the journal, in this or in other departments, that the editors would wish to emphasize, it is that the *American Historical Review* has always been edited primarily in the interest of its readers; indeed, it may fairly be said that the readers' interests have solely been regarded, except in cases where, such considerations standing equal, other interests could legitimately be taken into account. Thus, in the selection of reviewers, it is not the author, still less the publisher, whose interests have been considered, but those of the reader. For his benefit we have sought the aid of the reviewer most qualified in respect to knowledge, judgment, and fairness of mind. Men's books have not been reviewed by their colleagues and friends—neither by their enemies, but the "history man" usually has none—not that friend or colleague or enemy might not judge his book fairly, but readers might not think so. (Says Confucius, "Under an apple-tree adjust not your hat; in a cucumber-patch tie not your shoe.") It is a pleasant reward for the pains expended on these details that, so far as is remembered, no one has ever accused the *Review* of log-rolling or the opposite vice—except once the publisher of a very bad text-book.

Text-books are a special variety, and require a special treatment. Some have thought it beneath the dignity of an historical quarterly of the three-decker class to concern itself with these freight-carrying merchantmen. In the minds of the editors, however, the controlling consideration was that historical books of this sort are more used than any others, that a large portion of our readers are text-book-using teachers, and that it is particularly hard to obtain disinterested judgments respecting such volumes. There is a fierce light that doth beat upon a text-book. For several years the device employed by the *Review* was to retain a special group of five men, good teachers and good scholars, one in ancient history, one in medieval, one in modern, one in English, and one in American history, no one of whom had himself written a text-book or was likely to do so, but each of whom was a good judge of that genus, and to entrust to him all text-books that came in from his particular field. Fairer and more comparable judgments, based on more uniform standards, were thus secured; but after the establishment of the *History Teacher's Magazine*, with its admirable arrangements for

securing competent and disinterested reviews of text-books, it seemed best to resign that whole class of volumes, with a few exceptions, to that excellent journal.

Of reviews in general, what the editors have hoped for has been indicated in a circular which they have sent to all reviewers:

It is desired that the review of a book shall be such as will convey to the reader a clear and comprehensive notion of its nature, of its contents, of its merits, of its place in the literature of the subject, and of the amount of its positive contribution to knowledge. . . . It is hoped that the reviewer will take pains, first of all, to apprehend the author's conception of the nature and intent of his book and to criticize it with a due regard to its species and purpose. It should, however, be remembered that the review is intended for the information and assistance of readers, and not for the satisfaction of the author of the book. Sympathy, courtesy, a sense of attachment, readiness to make allowance for a different point of view, should not therefore withhold the reviewer from the straightforward expression of adverse judgment sincerely entertained; otherwise the Review cannot fulfill the important function of upholding a high standard of historical writing.

Whatever general suggestions might thus be laid before reviewers, the quality of the reviews, year after year, must perforce be what the reviewers make it. The managing editor can seldom be justified in asking them to modify what they have written, never in substituting his judgment for that of an expert whom he has selected as the best appraiser. If an author considers his reviewer's criticisms ill-founded, he has full liberty to reply, provided his response is confined to matters of fact, capable of being settled one way or the other, as distinguished from matters of opinion, on which author and reviewer might differ endlessly and without result. Probably our reviews have been on the average too lenient. Left free to sign or not to sign, most of our reviewers sign their reviews, and it is an uncomfortable thing to speak ill of a man's book when at the next Christmas season of peace on earth you are going to meet him at the meeting of the American Historical Association. Is it not perceptible that we "let ourselves go" a little more when we are reviewing the book of an Englishman, a Frenchman, or a German? No one wishes to see revived that "slashing" variety of review which delighted our grandfathers, or to emulate the controversial manners of the Germans;<sup>3</sup> but, as the circular indicates, if standards are to be maintained, reviewers must speak their minds, "without fear, favor, affection, or hope of reward".

Of the final section of the *Review's* contents, that devoted to

<sup>3</sup> Or ought one, now that warfare is ended, to be *Tacitus de moribus Germanorum*.

items of historical news, it is sufficient to say that, while in the first six volumes all were written by the managing editor, in the next four volumes those relating to European history were kindly supplied by Professor Earle W. Dow of Michigan, in the next three or four by Dr. Frances G. Davenport of the Carnegie Institution of Washington; for a number of years past, the majority of the American items have been provided by Dr. Edmund C. Burnett of the same institution, the greater number of the European by Professor George M. Dutcher of Wesleyan University.

Let us now return to the external history of the *Review*. Before the issue of the second number, there were, including the guarantors, 850 subscribers. Two years later there were a thousand. At that time, that is to say, in November and December, 1897, the guaranties having expired without the journal's becoming self-supporting, the Board of Editors began negotiations with the American Historical Association, with a view to aid. The Association had up to that time had no connection with the *Review*. Of the 324 guarantors, 144 were members of the Association when they made their guaranties, 180 were not. Of the thousand subscribers to the journal in the autumn of 1897, there were 850 who were not members of the Association and 150 who were members of it, while of the 800 members of the Association there were 650 who were not subscribers to the *Review*. The leading members of the Association's Executive Council at that time were reluctant to assume any financial responsibility for the journal, yet the logic of the situation and a due consideration of the objects which both institutions proclaimed and sought, called for some sort of organic relation.

At its Cleveland meeting of December, 1897, the Council, as a provisional measure, voted a subsidy to the treasury of the *Review* of a dollar a member, in return for which the numbers of the *Review* for July and October, 1898, should be sent to each member of the Association. A year later the Association, at its New Haven meeting, in December, 1898, proceeded to make a more permanent arrangement with the Board of Editors. According to its terms, the Association was thenceforward to pay to the publisher two dollars per annum for each member, in return for which the *Review* was to be sent to each; and the Council of the Association was to have the right to elect members of the Board, as their terms expired.

In 1901, on the resignation of the managing editor, Professor Andrew C. McLaughlin, of the University of Michigan, a member of the Board, was chosen to that position. In addition to the fresh intelligence and wisdom he brought to it, he benefited the journal

greatly by drawing into its circle new groups of contributors and by pursuing lines of tendency too little regarded hitherto. During his four years of service, moreover, and partly by reason of the high confidence which his abilities inspired, an arrangement was effected which in any view must be regarded as having been of great advantage to the *Review*. In 1903 the trustees of the Carnegie Institution of Washington agreed, at the instance of the Board of Editors, that Professor McLaughlin, coming to Washington as director of the Bureau (now Department) of Historical Research which the trustees were then establishing, should also, as a recognized part of his duties, continue to edit the *Review*. This arrangement was continued in force when, in 1905, on the resignation of Mr. McLaughlin, the writer of the present narrative was appointed by the trustees of the Carnegie Institution to succeed him as director of the same department and by the Board of Editors to be his successor as managing editor. The arrangement at once relieved the treasury of the *Review* of any charge for salary of that office, made it possible to pay regularly for articles (reviews had always been paid for), and provided an unusual amount of assistance in the work of editing. The *Review* is greatly indebted to its series of sub-editors, and most of all to Miss Elizabeth Donnan, now an assistant professor in Wellesley College, who served it in that capacity for seven years.

In the external history of the *Review* in recent years, the chief event has been the action, in 1916, by which the Board of Editors transferred to the American Historical Association whatever rights of ownership it possessed.<sup>4</sup> At the time, the transfer seemed to some members of the Association a matter of considerable moment. The relations between the Board, the publishers, and the Association doubtless seemed to these members needlessly complex; they might easily seem anomalous, to those who were not aware of the strikingly wide variety of arrangements which subsist in this country between scientific societies and scientific journals. Probably many members believed that the Association supported the *Review*, or paid much the greater part of its expenses, and therefore ought to own it, or perhaps did own it. In reality the Association at that time was paying four-ninths of its cost, the Carnegie Institution three-ninths, the publishers two-ninths. But though the Board of Editors supposed itself to be the legal owner of the journal, in so far as its history permitted anyone (unless the publishers) to claim its ownership, and though, when the question was raised, competent

<sup>4</sup> For the details, see *Review*, XXI. 459, 462, 466; XXII. 531; XXIII. 524, 525.



legal authority sustained that view, the editors did not attach serious importance to the inquiry. Since it is admitted that, under whatever ownership, a scientific journal ought to be edited solely in the interest of its readers (and the readers, in this instance, are, nearly all, members of the Association), it is only in the case of substantial pecuniary profits that it can matter who is its owner; and pecuniary profits could not in this case be expected. As a matter of fact, the Association assumed ownership just in time to incur the heavy responsibilities resulting from the extraordinarily enhanced cost of paper and printing. But under the circumstances the Board of Editors, when acting in the interest of the Association, has taken no different action from what it would have taken if acting solely on its own responsibility—it has reduced the number of pages and otherwise kept down expenses, without, it is hoped, seriously impairing the usefulness of the journal.

Apparently the transfer of ownership, or questions respecting it, would have excited little interest if they had not been involved with questionings raised at the same time concerning the constitution and management of the Association itself. But the recent history of the American Historical Association is another story,<sup>5</sup> and it suffices here to say that that society, which like most other such societies had hitherto been managed by a moderate number of those most interested, was in 1915 undergoing a mild revolution or reorganization in a democratic sense. Students of the history of democratic revolutions know that, from the most violent to the most urbane, they present certain analogies. When constitutions are thrown into the melting-pot, it is natural to question anything that looks like special privilege, any arrangement that seems to be based on history rather than on logic. So *Messieurs les Rédacteurs* became *les citoyens rédacteurs*, with entire complaisance, but are still elected by the Council in the same manner, and, it is hoped, for the same reasons, as before.

When the *Review* had completed its twentieth volume, it printed<sup>6</sup> a classified statement of the fields in which its many articles had lain. A fresh calculation, made now that the number of volumes has increased from twenty to twenty-five, would require little change in some of the indications which the former list gave as to the interests and predilections of American historical writers; thus, the proportion of articles in American history still remains about forty per cent. But the last five years show one striking difference. The

<sup>5</sup> Its history from its foundation in 1884 to the year 1909 has already been recounted in this journal, XV. 1-20.

<sup>6</sup> XXI. 194.

statement made in 1915 justly recorded it as "a strange and not wholly creditable fact" that "out of nearly four hundred articles only eight have related to the history of Europe since 1815". The Great War, if it has done no other good thing, has worked powerfully toward redressing this deficiency. The total number of such articles is now already twice as great. It is true that, of those which the five years have added, nearly a dozen in number, several were the result of editorial instigation, for the war-time policy of the editors was very distinctly that of seeking to clarify public opinion on the issues of the war by adding to public knowledge of the most recent periods of history.<sup>7</sup> But it is also plainly true, and a fact of great and encouraging significance, that the war, among other sobering effects, has caused historical scholars to ask themselves, more searchingly than ever before, what things in history are most worth while, what lines of historical investigation are most likely to be profitable toward the instruction of mankind, to estimate practical values, to question conventional topics and procedures. "The historian's insight into the past", said Niebuhr, whose youth had been passed during the French Revolution, "will be the deeper, the greater and the more terrible the events he has witnessed with a bleeding or a rejoicing heart" When we see the crop of first-rate historians which the Reformation, and again the French Revolution, working upon young minds, produced in the next generation, we cannot doubt that the war just ended, the downfall of monarchies, the sudden rise of democratic and socialistic republics, above all perhaps the communistic revolution in Russia, will in turn bring into existence in each civilized country an extraordinary generation of historians, will produce a harvest the like of which the present generation has not seen.

If the work of the future is to be such as we could neither estimate nor perhaps understand, at least we shall have left to it a comprehensive record of our doings, and full evidence of what we thought in matters of history. Twenty-five volumes, twenty-two thousand pages of print, two or three cubic feet of rather solid historical matter! It is at least an impressive monument to one generation of historical workers in America. It might have been better; it must have been useful. Our thanks to all who have helped to make it so!

J. F. J.

<sup>7</sup> "Historical Scholars in War Time", XXII. 831-835: